MOTHER EARTH

Vol. VII. APRIL, 1912 No. 2

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MOTHER EARTH

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Vol. VII **APRIL, 1912** **No. 2**

OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS

AT Easter time the legend of the martyrdom of Jesus is very much in evidence, hawked about at every street corner. "Jesus died for me," for "all humanity." And "all humanity," whether it wish it or not, is made responsible for this martyrdom. Well might mankind ask to be let alone, to take care of its own "sins." What profit it the wounds and scalps of Christ and the numerous other saviors?

What a blessing it would have been, had Jesus remained on that alleged Good Friday in his grave, and gone the way of all that is earthy. If in that way the salvation mania could be cured, we would have long since been rid of the nuisance of earthly saviors and divine idolatry. There would then be no more need of calling upon humanity to emancipate itself from its saviors, and to dethrone heaven, that the earth be made a fit place to live.

But the apostles and the disciples, and no less the priests, had great need of the resurrection of the Lord. The miracles had to be performed, that man be forced to his knees, that he adore and pray, and be meek and obedient.

The Crucifixion, the Resurrection, and the Annunciation to boot! A veritable monster show a la Barnum.

Our Easter, *our* resurrection does not rest upon the hope of a savior. We shall hail it as the resurrection when the workers of Europe and America will lay down their tools and proclaim the General Strike; when the peasants of Mexico and Russia will expropriate the land from the usurpers, and when the international proletariat

of the world will unite in their common cause and realize that land and liberty is the inalienable inheritance of all men.

* * *

TERRIFIED by the General Strike, the government of Great Britain hastened to pass the Minimum Wage Bill—a gross miscarriage of governmental impotence and demagoguery in economic matters.

In the first place, the new law entirely fails to provide for a minimum wage. It is recognized only theoretically, on paper. In practical application the manufacturers of England—like those of Lawrence—will do their utmost to force upon their employees starvation wages as a minimum wage.

This law masks an element of treachery that labor should beware of. It will necessarily result in governmental compulsion: when the minimum wage is fixed by the arbitration boards, or similar bodies, the workers will be legally forced to submit to the decision, however detrimental to their interests. In other words, this bill is designed as a guillotine for the decapitation of strikes, especially of the General Strike.

If the workers will give their consent to this bill, they will thus themselves help to bind their hands with the chains of legality, that will make more difficult, if not entirely preclude, independent action in the future.

* * *

THE vision of awakening labor is striking terror into the powers that be. Sir Forrest Fulton, the Recorder of London, has become so alarmed by the new tide of Syndicalism that he felt called upon to voice his grave apprehensions before the grand jury of Old Bailey:

> Many of you who might not have known a month ago what syndicalism means, probably know now what it is, as it has occupied a prominent position. It is a diabolical system invented by somebody or other for the purpose of promoting general strikes and apparently to establish a Socialist republic.
>
> It means striking in one trade and inducing other trades to strike also. Syndicalism is supposed to benefit the workers, but, judging by the experience which the country is having—tens of thousands of persons out of employment and their wives and children without means—it does not appear to be benefiting them.

Some day the worthy Recorder may get a deeper in-

sight into Syndicalism. He will then know that it does not mean merely a few more cents in wages or less hours; but that it signifies the entire expropriation of the usurpers of wealth—which ultimately is synonymous with the establishment of well being for all.

Such a probability fills the enemy with dismay. Hence the ruthless persecution of syndicalists. Recently an English court condemned the editors of the *Syndicalist* to 6-9 months' imprisonment. And Tom Mann was thrown into jail because he advised the soldiers to refuse to shoot their brothers and fathers, and to make common cause with the workers. Had Tom Mann followed the devious paths of many another labor leader in England and America, had he turned traitor, like John Burns, he would now enjoy public honors and a sinecure, instead of languishing behind the bars.

* * *

AN editorial in the N. Y. *Call* (March 19th) unwittingly illumines the stupefaction of Socialist politicians over the fact that the General Strike is becoming a universal factor in the labor struggle. Think of it! Socialist congresses and theoreticians have persistently denounced and opposed the general strike idea; they have condemned it as "general nonsense," the miscarriage of an overheated Anarchist imagination, and fought it by all means, fair and foul. And here—*horrible dictu!*—the General Strike is even winning great victories! Listen to the *Call:*

> Some idea of the rapidity with which events are moving throughout the world of labor may be obtained by a glance backward at the status of the general strike as it appeared but a short time ago to Socialist congresses and party theorists. But a year or so ago the German Socialist convention, in discussing the question, came to the general conclusion that it was a most uncertain weapon, doubtful as to practicability, and only seemingly possible of use under peculiar circumstances, which could not very well be defined. And but a few months ago J. Ramsay McDonald, looked upon by many as the most practical British Socialist, in a lengthy essay, reached much more unfavorable conclusions regarding it, leaving the distinct impression that it was on the whole both impossible and impractical.
>
> But to-day, in Mr. MacDonald's own country, we not only see a general strike in the mining industry, but one so entirely possible and practical that those taking part in it look upon their victory as practically secured already. In addition, it is now stated that there is every likelihood that the existing general

strike may very shortly become still more "general" by the transport workers and practically all the other unions in the country laying down their tools. And there is none to-day in England, whether capitalist or Socialist, to deny the possibility of this occurrence.

Very well. But why not be honest about it? The story of the General Strike is not all told, without pointing out that it was the Anarchists who since the days of the *Internationale* have steadily advocated direct fighting methods and propagated the General Strike, and that for this they were denounced by the Socialist politicians as madmen and *agents provocateurs.*

* * *

SEIDEL failed of re-election as mayor of Milwaukee. The circumstance offers certain newspapers, like the *Times,* an opportunity to spout about the red flag being forced to flee before the national banner.

Nonsense! What, metaphorically speaking, was fluttering above the City Hall of Milwaukee was not the red flag, but a whitish gray rag, which was to proclaim that in the "Socialist City of Milwaukee" the storekeepers could continue to do good business, while the proletarians continue to cast their votes. As to Socialism, the administration of Seidel had no relation to it whatever. He promised only honesty—under a system the very cornerstone of which is dishonesty and exploitation. The Socialist cockroach politicians neither could nor had the courage to attack the interests and the stolen wealth of the possessing class, nor strike a blow at wage slavery. On the contrary, every one of these politicians considered it his first duty, immediately upon assuming office, to assure the tradesmen that in "this Socialist town" they could continue to conduct their business on the same principle, and with equal, if not greater, success than before. The real problems of Socialism they left untouched. They busied themselves with stupid, petty palliatives. They sought to "reform" in Milwaukee the morals of the citizens; nosed about *Tingeltangel* and dance halls, to determine whether everything was done in proper bourgeois-moral style. What tremendously ludricous burlesque of Socialism!

The Seidels and Bergers administered the affairs of

the city like an orphan asylum. They gave satisfaction neither to the old politicians nor to real Socialists, for the latter could find no indication of Socialism in Seidel's régime. Hence, quite naturally, he was forced to close up shop.

It is to be hoped that the people will soon learn the lesson of this political frog-jumping game, and realize the farce of such experiments. It is about time to understand that the emancipation of labor is not a matter of making ducks and drakes in the swamp of political corruption. The abolition of capitalism is a serious problem. Political quackery will not compass it. It requires courageous and direct action of the workers along social and industrial lines.

* * *

IT is a source of great pleasure to observe how the Lawrence strike, carried to a successful issue without the farce of "recognition" or arbitration, has stirred the whole textile industry of New England. The workers in mill and factory have been roused in the larger as well as the smaller industrial centres. They are awakening from their apathy and beginning to realize that strikes, if conducted as in Lawrence, with its tremendous manifestation of solidarity, need not be failures —as so many recent strikes were—and that it is not necessary to turn the labor arena into a market place for aspiring politicians like the John Goldens.

The result of the struggle is that in various places the wages of the workers have been raised "voluntarily," because the manufacturers feared that the example of Lawrence would inspire the workers everywhere with courage and solidarity, beyond the power of club and bayonet to subdue.

However, Ettor and Giovannitti, and a number of others, are still being kept in prison on charges that would never have been made, were not Justice the prostitute of the exploiters. Moreover, there is much want and suffering among the textile workers, as a result of the long heroic strike. It is imperative that every sympathizer with the cause of labor hasten to aid the struggling toilers.

REPORTS from San Francisco inform us of thousands of workingmen facing starvation, as a result of the hosts of unemployed lured to the Coast by deceptive advertisements by the Otis band of speculators, who need cheap labor and scabs. The men are on the verge of desperation. Demonstrations of unemployed are taking place in San Francisco and other cities, but as usual, the starving workers receive only empty promises from grafting politicians. The labor bodies have issued a proclamation warning all workers to keep away from the Coast, where nothing but hunger is awaiting them.

In contrast to this wide-spread misery—as if to prove that our national prosperity is no vain boast—is the dinner party recently given by a plutocratic parasite. The report illumines the situation, without further comment.

Washington, D. C.—The $30,000 dinner and reception given by Mr. and Mrs. Edward McLean in the old Thomas F. Walsh mansion, in Massachusetts avenue, was one of the most elaborate social functions Washington has seen in many seasons. With the palatial rooms of the house decorated with 4,000 lilies brought from England at a cost of $8,000, with two stars from the Metropolitan Opera Company to furnish entertainment, and with Mrs. McLean wearing, for the first time, the famous $150,000 Hope diamond, the guests were astonished at the lavishness. Mrs. McLean wore a gown of white satin with overdress of silver net, gracefully draped, and a broad border of white roses about the satin skirt. Her only jewels were two diamonds of world wide fame, the precious Hope stone being arranged tastefully in her hair, just over her forehead, and a still larger one suspended from a platinum chain about her neck.

* * *

ANTONIA D'ALBA, a young stonemason, recently shot at the king of Italy. Naturally, the incident at once gave the authorities a pretext for a general hunt upon Anarchists.

The newspapers of our dear republic vied with each other to express their deepfelt sympathy with "his Majesty, the King." They entirely ignored that this Majesty is the head of a murderous band that has lately been exterminating inoffensive Arabs in Tripoli by bombs thrown from the safe distance of airships. When such wholesale slaughter is applauded as perfectly legal and admirable, why all this indignation because of the attempted removal of one man, even if he happens to be a crowned murderer?

DIRECT ACTION VERSUS IMPOSSIBILISM

By E. J. HIGGINS.

"Capitalism must fall that Socialism may arise."
—LIEBKNECHT.

THE strength of direct action as "the hope of the working class" consists not merely in that the proletarian army itself contains all the necessary elements for its deliverance from wage slavery, and that this army needs no representation on the outside of that field of action in which the classes clash over questions economic. Nor is the sensibleness of direct action merely made of the fact that those yet immature methods of passive resistance which we do and will use inside and outside of the shop are direct methods of striking the enemy where he alone can feel; as against the indirect method which makes politicians out of the wage workers in the hope that they may represent us in a place where we cannot be, need not be, never were, never will be represented. Nor are the hosts of men and women now in rebellion against the inevitable effect of capitalism's evolution to merely see in direct action an improved method of defensive fighting. Direct action means more than any of these. Its superlative greatness lies in the fact that it is the straight road to the tearing down of capitalism; and that everything else is reform.

The direct actionist repudiates the capitalist mode of production; and the political superstructure which is ever becoming more complex in answer to the needs of the growing interdependence of capitalists. The capitalist system was not made by laws; the laws we have are the product of the capitalist system.

As a wage-worker the direct actionist understands that the encroachments of capital can only be resisted by the ability of his class to control its labor power in the labor market; and that Socialism can no more be brought about through the State than through the Church.

Direct action commands the respect of the wage-worker in about the same proportion that it commands the wrath of the capitalist, lawyer, and professor.

None but reformers have any business with the indirect action of politics. Reformers see in the labor problem a series of "evils" which they propose to eradicate, one "evil" at a time; beginning, quite likely, with "pure milk" for the young: and ending, not unlikely, with "old age pensions" for the old. Naturally the reformers find their proper sphere, the State. On the other hand, revolutionists see in the labor problem but one "evil," capitalism; and they know that it makes no difference to the wage slaves who are being ground into "surplus-value" in the industrial arena, what kind of parasites are holding office in the State. The revolutionist knows that capitalism, with or without "labor laws," is a fraud; and that it can produce nothing but an increasing measure of misery for the working class. It is for this reason all revolutionists oppose all so-called "measures," "steps," etc., which "measures," "steps," etc., is the proper work of the capitalist class. A Socialist must be a revolutionist. No person can take a place in the State without becoming a reformer. The "legal" atmosphere of politics dampens the ardor of the best of persons and robs them of their intolerance. Political action leads to capitalism reformed. Direct action leads to Socialism. Socialism, the common ownership and management of the means of production, being the goal of the direct actionist, he has no use for political office. Guided by Marx's analysis of capitalist production, and understanding that it is *in* that process the working class is robbed, he works to change the system.

The politician does not agree with the Socialist position that the law of value is immutable, so we see the politician trying to set aside the working of the law of value by legislation. Persons who advocate reform as a means of patching up the capitalist system are on the right track. This article merely presumes to hold the mirror up to that species of reformer who has been trying to climb the one-runged ladder of reform into Socialism, and who has been coming back to his starting place every turn.

The direct actionist sees the unemployed army growing ever larger, and therefore wishes to put an end to this reform impossibilism which is gradually

emasculating the workers. Let those who say they are Socialists advocate Socialism, and stop fooling the workers with that which is something else.

Tinkering with legislation, and merely changing the relation of the parts of capital does not lead toward Socialism, but, on the contrary, to an intensification of the exploitation of the workers.

The capitalist system must, within a certain limit, go on revolutionizing the means of production; this, of course, means that the amount of capital that is to be paid in wages, "variable capital," becomes gradually smaller. There being an increase of that part of capital paid for labor-displacing machinery, etc., "constant capital," it is clear enough that there must be a decrease of "variable capital." All Socialists understand that it is only "variable capital" that can employ wage-labor, and that the action of competition itself tends to reduce this form of capital. Apace with this development grows the army of unemployed. This is all quite elemental, yet it seems we do really need to give closer attention to other forces which, when they are set to work, accelerate these changes. This thought was suggested to me by a passage in Haywood's great speech, which made all the politicians of the S. P. wish he was in hell.

Haywood, perhaps unintentionally, creates the collateral idea that the installation of labor-displacing machinery depends solely on the inspiration of inventors. The really important forces, though, which have made for the installation of labor-displacing machinery are those forces which have increased the cost of labor power. "Capital" is replete with historical proof of this. P. 476, Kerr edition, we read: "It would be possible to write quite a history of the inventions, made since 1830, for the sole purpose of supplying capital with weapons against the revolts of the working class." The glass industry, printing industry, building industry, etc., are living examples of the futility of reforms; and confirmations of the correctness of the Socialist contention that nothing but Socialism is a remedy.

Suppose, for example, we turned our movement into an "8-hour day" affair; let us even suppose we

were able to establish such an anachronism as a universal "8-hour day" under capitalism. Such a state of affairs would, by forcing the capitalist class to reduce its "variable capital," make the unemployed army larger. And that would not be "solving the unemployed problem" by a long shot; nor would it even be a "step" toward Socialism.

The encroachments of capital most certainly must be resisted, and the best way to resist them is to resist capitalism by making the workers understand what it is. It is good tactics to strike wherever we see a weak spot in capitalism, and there are a few of these on the industrial field; there lies also the danger of being led away by the whirligig of gradual "amelioration." Capitalism carries with it a social relation, the relation of competing proletarians to buyers of labor-power. It therefore follows that on the basis of capitalist production, where there must always be surplus labor time in the working-day, there can be no improvement of the condition of the working class; the growing competition amongst the workers for jobs will not allow it.

We have seen that capitalism cannot employ all the workers, and, for that good reason, cannot give them all an "8-hour day." An "8-hour day movement" is, therefore, inconsistent with any organization which presumes to represent the interests of the whole working class; and particularly so when it is represented as being a "step" toward the "expropriation of the expropriators." The immutability of the law of value renders any "steps" toward Socialism impossible. And persons who think they can gradually reduce the hours in the working-day to the point where there would be no more surplus-value, are as much at war with direct action as the politician who thinks we should absorb surplus-value by paying for it with bonds.

It has been the main business of capitalism to establish for the respective wage-worker his standard of existence, and a normal working-day. The capitalist class cannot, generally speaking, profitably work their slaves much longer than 10.5 hours; the

passing of the 10-hour Act in 1847 was largely a recognition of this fact.

On page 576 of the Kerr edition of "Capital" a factory inspector is quoted as follows: "All things being equal, the English manufacturer can turn out a considerably larger amount of work in a given time than a foreign manufacturer, so much as to counterbalance the difference between 60 hours a week here, and 72 or 80 elsewhere."

Marx's whole work is an argument against these "measures," which keep the workers moving in a circle. P. 580, "Capital": "Only by suppressing the capitalist form of production could the length of the working-day be reduced to the necessary labor time." On the other hand, p. 447, "Capital": "The immoderate lengthening of the working-day, produced by machinery in the hands of capital, leads to a reaction on the part of society, the very sources of whose life are menaced; and, thence, to a normal working-day whose length is fixed by law."

It is the business of the State to perpetuate slavery by reforms, and to protect, by legislation, the working class—from Socialism.

It has been argued for this particular "measure," the "8-hour day," by the paper *Solidarity*: "It promotes the development of industry to a more and more concentrated and highly perfected form." But it is not the business of revolutionists to "promote" a development which must, for the reasons given above, inevitably increase the suffering of the working class. The real work of a revolutionary movement is to educate and organize the workers that we may take charge of the industries before too much of this "development" takes place. Reformers, nevertheless, are making this work quite difficult.

We must go right on with strikes wherever we see a chance to hit a capitalist on the pocket-book, and surely we must make them as general as it is possible and necessary to make them. Sabotage is also a first-class weapon, and it is too bad it can only be used as an individual's plan. All of these weapons, though, are merely able to partially hold back the encroach-

ments of capitalism—a system which, with or without palliatives, gradually grinds us down.

It need hardly be stated that the life-blood of capitalism is the fact that the workers are existing on the very brink of starvation. This condition was purposely brought about so that capital could function. On this point Marx writes, pp. 791-92, "Capital": "What the capitalist system demanded was, on the other hand, a degraded and almost servile condition of the mass of the people, the transformation of them into mercenaries, and of their means of labor into capital."

It may be well, at this place, to remind the reader that the real question before the working class is not the question as to whether *direct* action is better for the working class than *political* action; but which of the two is direct action? We know that it is direct action we want.

The reformers of fifty years ago thought they could have "a bourgeoisie without a proletariat": the reformers of to-day think they can have capitalism without the unemployed army.

Direct action means to aim straight at the thing on which capitalism rests, and that's property. Political action means to aim at a reflex of property, the State. But nothing can be got for the working class out of these "debates" with the hirelings of the capitalist class.

The State will surrender nothing until the capitalists see "our ladders on their wall," and even then it will be in the hope of fooling us a while longer.

Said Nietzsche: "Whatever the State saith is a lie; whatever it hath is a theft: all is counterfeit in it, the gnawing, sanguinary, insatiate monster. It even bites with stolen teeth. Its very bowels are counterfeit."

Changes in the State concern not the working class; but changes in the workshops do. In the State is no place to preach the revolution, where everybody's little graft is dependent on their being retainers. On the other hand, if preaching reform is the proper course, the political movement of the working class should never have been organized—not to men-

tion the I. W. W. We organized these movements because we saw, more clearly than many seem now to see, that the indirect route leads astray; and that the methods of the old parties and "unions" are harmful to our class. The fathers of Socialism saw that our movement should be distinct and revolutionary; and it is good to see such brilliant signs as "that Haywood speech" lighting for us the way back to the straight road.

I am for direct action because it is the only way in which the workers can develop power, and effectively use that power when it is developed. For the workers there can be no such thing as "political power." The power wielded by master classes against their slaves is not "political," i. e., not given to the masters through votes. The strategic position of the capitalist class was acquired by, and now rests on, physical force. It is economic power, a power which existed before the slave class had votes. It follows, then, that the workers cannot "capture" through the ballot box anything deserving the name *power*. Power is a real thing. It must be generated within our own ranks. Education and organization on the industrial field is power. They are bewildered who think that the murder machinery of the capitalist class can be "captured" by votes. Unless the workers are kept clear of the poisonous atmosphere of the Bergers, Barneses, lawyers, preachers, professors, real estate agents, fortune-tellers, and all the rest of the freaks of the so-called "parties," we will have a 20th Century Feudalism before we know it. All aboard for the I. W. W. Death to politics!

❦ ❦ ❦

DIRECT ACTION—Conscious individual or collective effort to protest against, or remedy, social conditions through the systematic assertion of the economic power of the workers.

COUNTRY-WIDE FREE SPEECH FIGHTS

THERE may still be people extant in this country who believe in the American Constitution. They must be classified with those who believe in miracles, in the curative power of blessed water, and the Holy Grail of Hoboken.

Throughout the country, in the West and in the East, the authorities are suppressing free speech, and mercilessly persecuting those who protest against the outrage. Hardly had terminated the Cossack régime at Lawrence, when Passaic, N. J., became the arena of most barbaric brutality. The silk workers of the city, out on strike, arranged meetings to consider their grievances and form demands. What happens? The myrmidons of Capital, with the aid of the local government, break up the gatherings, club men and women, and drag inoffensive workers to jail. Nor is that all. The Mayor of the city issues orders to the hallkeepers, threatening them with arrest and punishment if they should rent their places to the Industrial Workers. Speakers are dragged off the platform, maltreated and beaten, and it is officially announced that William D. Haywood will be arrested on sight, if he dares visit the city. He might have "the intention" of speaking—and that is sufficient to stamp him a criminal under our free institutions.

In the West, San Diego is the battle ground where the Constitution has been relegated to the dung heap. I. W. W., Socialists, and Anarchists refuse to be robbed of the right to speak to the people; they are trying to organize the workers in California—as everywhere—against the exploitation and oppression of capital. This is the crime, to suppress which the authorities and armed citizen bands in San Diego resort to means that for brutality find a parallel only in the darkest period of the Middle Ages.

The telegraph has carried the news across the continent that a body of armed hooligans has under threat of death forced a hundred I. W. W. men to kneel in the streets of San Diego and kiss the American flag,—the noble emblem that masks exploitation and corruption. These brave liberty fighters were poor workers, most of whom lacked even the means for the next night's lodg-

ing. After the outrage perpetrated upon them, these men—incredible as it may seem—were actually driven into the desert, and left there to starve.

From the history of religious persecution of former ages we know that Christians were forced to spit upon the consecrated host, and Jews compelled to kiss swine, but this modern bloodthirsty man-hunt against the free speech fighters can be compared only with the murderous pogroms perpetrated in Russia by the Black Hundreds of the Tsar.

What will be the harvest from the seed thus sown? The reactionists will hypocritically feign surprise if the lightning with which they are now charging the atmosphere, should be transformed into dynamite explosions.

The Free Speech League of California has issued an appeal to all liberty lovers, from which document we quote:

At a meeting of the Merchants' and Manufacturers' Association, held in the Grant Hotel, it was decided that the education of the Army of the Unemployed by the I. W. W. must cease. In the efforts of the police to accomplish this, the following has occurred, and is daily occurring.

Michael Hoy died in Agnew Hospital, March 28th, as the result of a kick in the groin by a member of the police force, the kicking being seen by many witnesses. Hoy was refused adequate medical attention by the police, and was cared for by the Free Speech League.

Woman struck in stomach by club in hands of police while playing part of spectator on street. Unconscious for hours.

Men, women and children soaked by water played upon them by fire engines at instigation of police. Baby-carriage overturned and baby swept into gutter by powerful stream of water.

Men arrested on streets, held in detectives' room with no charge preferred against them, taken at midnight in automobiles twenty miles into the hills, where they were clubbed, kicked and threatened with death if they return. Many men have returned, however, exhibiting gory heads with blood-soaked coats and collars, blood on one man running from head to waist. Photographs of same and of bruised bare backs, are in our possession, and are being printed along with sworn affidavits proving the above, in many papers, among which are San Francisco *Bulletin* and San Diego *Herald,* whose editor, Sauer, was kidnapped recently.

Members of American Federation of Labor kidnapped in these automobile parties. The Central Labor Councils and Building Trades Councils of Los Angeles and of San Diego officially supporting the fight against abolition of free speech and press and against the anti-picketing ordinance, which masquerades as a "move on" ordinance.

Men beaten up in cells, their screams being heard by the other prisoners.

Police refuse to allow copies of San Francisco *Bulletin* or San Diego *Herald,* containing news items on fight, to be sold on streets, and arresting all who attempt sale of same.

Sworn affidavits as to bitter prejudice on part of members of grand jury, who indicted prisoners on felony charge, are held by judge in no way to invalidate indictment. Yet jury was not charged to try men by name, but as members of the I. W. W. The felony charges are based on the action of prisoners who destroyed jail property, as protest against being denied food and water, being compelled by thirst to drink out of the toilet.

Between two and three hundred men, women and children have been arrested, being members of the I. W. W., Socialist Party, and trades unions.

The trades unions on the coast are realizing that this fight is their fight and every effort will be made to march to San Diego the 50,000 unemployed men who will soon be paraded in San Francisco. Officials of the A. F. of L. of Los Angeles state that when this army reaches Los Angeles in its line of march, that city will swell the ranks by 10,000.

Money is needed to conduct the defense of the many who are to be railroaded to the penitentiary on a charge of criminal conspiracy—conspiracy to violate a law aimed at free speech and organized labor. These men, women and children are fighting your fight—a fight that must be fought if the labor and revolutionary movement of the Pacific Coast is to retain any of the so-called inherent rights previously existent. It is quite possible that the war in San Diego will resolve itself into a struggle of national import, and you are strongly urged to do your part in giving the oligarchy's association the greatest fight in its experience.

Trusting that the above will inspire you to put yourselves immediately on record as supporters of the working class in this battle, both by way of appropriate and effective publicity and by financial assistance to the extent of your ability, we are

Collectively yours,

CALIFORNIA FREE SPEECH LEAGUE,
PUBLICITY DEPARTMENT,
335 Union Building, San Diego, Cal.

At the present moment a number of presidential candidates are claiming the public ear. They don't tire assuring us of their tremendous interest in the welfare of the nation. But none of them—nor our loud-mouthed press—has a single word of protest against the outrages upon the elemental rights of the people being perpetrated throughout the country by plutocratic conspirators, aided by irresponsible law maniacs. It is high time—and we want to impress this most forcibly upon the labor

organizations of the country, as well as upon the enemy —that this hounding of the workers be stopped, and stopped quickly, with a firm and resolute hand. For this purpose we call upon the workingmen of the country at once to proceed to organize militant self-defence bodies, to assert, aggressively and determinedly, their rights to life and liberty.

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Unemployed of America! Proletarians, Attention!

March on San Diego. Join the army of ten thousand marching from San Francisco; join the March of the Hungry. Go to San Diego; demand your right of Free Speech; demand bread; demand freedom. You are not wanted where you are, and San Diego needs you. Fall in line. BE MEN.

California Free Speech League.

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THE POWER OF THE IDEAL

"For the man I touch there is a path traced out in the sand by a finger which no man sees. That he must follow. Some times it leads almost to the top, and then turns down suddenly into the valley. He must follow it, though none else sees the tracing."

—OLIVE SCHREINER, in
"A Dream of Wild Bees."

AND who is more ready with advice than those that do not see the tracing? If the struggle is hard, they say, why not give up? why go on? How are they to know that he who is touched by the Ideal, must follow the tracing in the sand, though it never lead but down to the valley? They do not know, hence do not understand.

Since last I wrote, our path never lead but to the valley. More than once it seemed as though we could not continue. But such is the power of the Ideal, that one must go on in spite of himself. At the moment of black despair, of heartrending disappointment, there always appears the mountain top, so temptingly near; and though none else sees the tracing, he whom the ideal has touched must go on.

CHICAGO, always hideous and depressing, has been made endurable by the faithful few MOTHER EARTH has gathered on its tireless journey. But even they could not infuse life into the monotony of Chicago. And but for the debates, there would be nothing of interest to record. However, the debates helped to disclose the great gap in the world of American intellectual life. They also showed, more than Anarchists ever could, the emptiness and bombast of American Socialism.

A friend of mine nicknamed Chicago "I second the motion," because it has no originality and always apes New York. I do not think I am particularly addicted to local patriotism, yet I am convinced that such limitations as demonstrated by one of my opponents, Dr. Denslow Lewis, and such vulgarity as displayed by the "Prophet of Chicago Socialism," Arthur Morrow Lewis, are entirely Chicagoan, since no one in New York could be guilty of either to such an extent.

Dr. Lewis is a well-known physician, a man who for years has been somewhat of a pioneer in urging sex instruction in schools. One would therefore suppose him to be well posted and broad-minded. But he is woefully lacking in both. His defence of the institution of marriage, as the conserver of the best interests in society, consisted of an eulogy of the new tendency of the State in demanding marriage certificates of health. That, the Doctor urged, would protect woman, and insure greater harmony in the marriage relation. The human mind is indeed a strange compound, if an educated, enlightened man will see in the ever growing invasiveness of the State a cure for our social cancers.

The debate with the Socialist Prophet was, to say the least, funny. It took this man two years to decide whether E. G. was worthy of his "Eminence." I do not know what decided in my favor, except that Mr. Lewis may have recognized that E. G. is a good business investment. At any rate, after much bargaining, the "prize fight" was agreed upon. And though my Socialist opponent proved himself more amateurish than a little street urchin, I am grateful to him for the opportunity he has given his flock to see how barren the man is, when he is called upon to defend his cherished position. Verily, among the blind the one-eyed is the seer; other-

wise his adherents would long ere this have seen the shallowness of the man.

I have debated with a great many Socialists, but for bombast and arrogance, Lewis beats them all. These were some of his intellectual gems, "Direct action is unscientific, because the I. W. W. are bums, tramps, and hoboes, easily bought and sold; therefore it is insanity to expect anything vital from them." "Insanity, madness, idiocy, and stupidity" are Mr. Lewis's favorite stock phrases, applied to every one who will not agree with him. Needless to say, the Anarchists—according to Mr. Lewis—are nothing but a pack of lunatics; as to Kropotkin, he is just foolish. However, that is not all. "Direct action means doing things with your bare hands. The direct actionist will raise a car with his bare hands, instead of taking a lever." Of course, the lever is political action. "Because I work within the law," said Mr. Lewis, "I can speak in the finest halls in Chicago. But look at E. G., she is a direct actionist, she must speak in dirty halls. What, then, does she accomplish?"

There was much more of such wisdom, but these quotations will suffice to acquaint our readers with the quality of the man's mind and character. Yet he has been for years the leader and teacher of some people; imagine, if you can, what these people must be. In the way of preparing his congregation, Lewis had the bad taste to announce a lecture on "The Failure of the Anarchist Philosophy," just four days before the debate. But even that stood him to little purpose. His insinuations, his cruel, unjust attacks on the I. W. W. boys, who now fill the jails in San Diego and who fought such a heroic battle in Lawrence, who starve and suffer, while Lewis travels about in his automobile, were more than even his sheep could stand. The debate itself was, of course, a farce. I had to use all of my time to defend the "bums, hoboes, and tramps," not so much because they needed a defence, but because all my sensibilities were outraged by a supposed Socialist using such "arguments" regarding a world-wide economic awakening. Then, too, it has always been an Anarchist tradition to sponsor the victims of political demagogues—the workers, used, betrayed, humiliated, and reviled by their leaders.

The Jewish meetings proved most interesting. Apart

of being the largest, they were also the most worth while, because of their quality. Certainly no other race will furnish from five hundred to a thousand people interested in such subjects as "Art and Revolution" or "Chantecleer," nor will one easily find so much understanding and fine appreciation among other people. The credit for the success of the Jewish meetings is due entirely to Comrade Wm. Natansohn, his sisters, and our faithful little Dr. Miriam Yampolsky.

Our visit to GRAND RAPIDS, while causing a considerable loss, was made good through the reunion with our splendid Comrade Wm. Buwalda. He and Comrade Bergman certainly left nothing undone to make the meetings successful. But between the Catholic Church to poison the minds of the masses, and the numerous factories to emaciate their bodies, it is difficult to get a large audience. Our ex-soldier boy is as fine as ever. He is a shining example for the power of character that will survive all odds. And one must have a very strong character, to come out unmarred by fifteen years in the U. S. army.

DETROIT, with its memories of *Der Arme Teufel,* its recollections of roses, wine, and song, can never quite lose its charm, dismal as the present atmosphere is. The faithful Mohican of the old guard, Emma Clausen, acquitted herself admirably as an "advance agent." With Comrade Ben Gordon she worked for weeks to make my coming known, and their efforts resulted in splendid audiences. On the other hand, our friends Mr. McKenney and Dr. Carr, provided the social phase of our visit, which made it both pleasant and restful.

ANN ARBOR has undergone a marvelous transformation since our first experience there. The same students who two years ago nearly caused a riot, were as gentle as lambs, most attentive and respectful, which is a triumph indeed. To a large extent this may be due to Prof. R. M. Wenley, who had delivered a series of lectures on Anarchism, thus dispelling the fog in the student's mind. But on the other hand, it was our first visit and the wild display of the students which no doubt induced the good Professor to deliver his course. Whichever the case, the change has taken place.

MILWAUKEE, the ruins of the erstwhile citadel of So-

cialism, bears witness to the paralyzing effect of the political hashish. Heine said that to waken the Germans one would have to tickle them with a lamp post between the ribs. Since Socialist politics has entered Milwaukee, nothing short of a torpedo will awaken them. I admire the courage of Comrade Leo Copczynski, if he can retain his devotion and zeal in such a sluggish, deadening atmosphere.

MADISON is still on the map, but the students do not make it a particular credit to the rest of the world. There are exceptions, of course. The average student, however, could learn much from some of our Jewish shop girls and boys. The latter are by far more alert, interested and intelligent, than these pampered American fellows, to whom college life is but a means to more successfully meet the world of greed and power.

MINNEAPOLIS is always a joy, and our friends ever true blue. Alas, the unique little Bohemian studio, which so charmed us last year, is no more. It was raided by the eunuchs of American morals, because the artists had made the unpardonable mistake of imagining that art in America can go about without pants and skirts. Think of such a crime! The "offensive nudes" are now in the safe care of the police, and our group of artists scattered to the winds. Ruth is still here. She it was who arranged the meetings, this being her first experience; and she did fine. With her, Esther Rabinowitch, Ada Wolfe, Axelson, and a few more friends worked hard for the lectures, while our old companions Grethen, Caspar, Richmand, and one or two others, furnished the fellowship part of the visit, which made it both pleasant and useful.

OMAHA, while never overburdening us with worldly success, always retains a warm place in our hearts. No small part of that is due to the sweet and gentle spirit of dear Mother Fageberg. She and her girls are a most remarkable family; their devotion to each other, and their kindness to all who come to them, make one feel far removed from this petty, ugly world of ours.

Our ever young and vigorous Mother Fageberg is certainly an inspiration. I felt it more this time than before, when I listened to her reminiscences of her meeting Bakunin in her native land, Sweden, after his escape

from Russia. The young Swedish girl carried away by the master mind and deep stirring powers of the Father of Anarchism. After fifty years of barren American life, Mother Fageberg is as she must have been then, in Bakunin's presence, idealistic and full of enthusiasm, now carried away by one who, like herself, received her first inspiration through the wisdom of a great teacher. How powerful is the Ideal, sweeping across space and time, knitting people together into one great, sweet comradeship.

Omaha added to our list of friends young Clarence Keelins, so unlike his generation. If only sordid life will not break him, he is sure to prove a valuable addition to our ranks. Also, our friend Sarah Vermehren, who faced the floods rather than miss the meetings. And, of course, our old faithful worker, Agursky.

After the impetus given to all of us by the Lawrence strike (for which, among other sums already acknowledged, $130.00 were contributed in Chicago), comes the battle for free speech in San Diego, which should enlist the cooperation and sympathy of every liberty lover. We have already started a fund, and will continue to hold that brave fight up before the public.

And though none else sees the tracing, he who has been touched by the Ideal must follow it to the very end.

EMMA GOLDMAN.

We mean to spend two weeks in Colorado, taking in Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Cripple Creek, and Boulder; thence to the seat of war, San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. We can be reached, until April 25th, Gen. Delivery, Denver. After that, until May 12th, Gen. Delivery, Los Angeles.

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ANARCHISM—The philosophy of a new social order based on liberty unrestricted by man-made law; the theory that all forms of government rest on violence, and are therefore wrong and harmful, as well as unnecessary.

BRIEUX'S THREE PLAYS

By M. BAGINSKI.

BERNARD SHAW contributed a long and clever preface to *Three Plays,* by Brieux, the most daring dramatist of our time. We use "daring" advisedly, because in spite of all our "enlightenment" and "modernity" it requires a good deal of courage openly and frankly to deal with the problems involved in these dramas; problems which, though they have long since revealed to the initiated the shame and incompetence of society, are still tabooed by the institutions that dominate public opinion, by universities and schools. These problems are of the greatest significance to life, to individual as well as to social welfare. They touch the intimate relationship of the family—of men, women, and children. And yet a blindfolded morality and persistent hypocrisy strive their utmost to keep these problems in the swamp of ignorance and silence.

In *Three Plays* Brieux boldly tears the veil off these forbidden subjects. He treads the path of Balzac, Ibsen, Zola, Maupassant, Tolstoy, Strindberg; but often he differs from them, in so far as the characters in his plays are entirely predetermined by their social conditions and environment; they flutter helplessly, like flies entangled in the spider's web. At every step the reader gets the overpowering impression of the necessity of revolutionizing social, economic, and sexual conditions of life, in order that the individual may breathe more freely. At every step the characters in the plays of Brieux run painfully up against the thick walls of social and moral prejudices that bar their way and hem them in, helplessly, on every side.

In the first play, *Maternity,* Brieux attacks the advocates of large families, of unlimited procreation. Who thunders loudest against "race suicide"? The capitalists and the generals. With good reason: they require armies of parials to fill their factories, they need the youth of the nations for the slaughter-fields of war. The hundreds of thousands of unemployed serve to depress wages, and thus increase the dividends of the wealthy patriots who, on their part, take very good care to limit their own families. In their case, many children would tend to

divide their income and property in too small parts—and property is the very institution that must dominate all the other institutions, that of marriage especially.

It is self-evident that these patriots for profit, in advocating large families for the common people, also demand that the children should be procreated in a respectable, legal way.

The district official in *Maternity,* who curries favor with the government and seeks advancement by his propaganda for increased population, drives his own servant into the street, because she became pregnant. Later on he acts in the same manner toward his sister-in-law. Were she detected in the act of stealing—he argues—it would not be such a terrible disgrace to his reputation as her illegal pregnancy. His moral indignation does not prevent him, however, from forcing his wife to bear children against her will. She does not love him; but that makes no difference. He is her wedded husband and the legal master of her bed. She would like to gain a rest after the bearing of a new child; to come to herself, as it were. But in vain her pleading, in vain her protests: he is the husband, whose legal rights do not exclude even rape.

A terrible indictment against our false conceptions and rotten institutions is contained in the court scene, in which a workingman and a girl school teacher are charged with preventing child birth. The woman who aided them is also in the prisoners' dock. She explains to the judge that she helped the unfortunate girls and women because of their desperate straits, out of a sense of sympathy and compassion. The judge retorts:

"So it was from pity, out of charity that you acted. The prosecution will reply that you never forgot to accept heavy payment."

Whereupon the woman replies:

"And you, aren't you paid for condemning others?"

The accused workingman explains to the court that his earnings are by far not sufficient to support a large family. Similarly the school teacher, who denounces the hypocrisy of the government that wants families of many children, while it underpays its employees in the most miserable manner.

The play closes with a violent scene in the courtroom.

The defendants deeply feel the injustice they are made to suffer, and bitterly resent being forced to pay the penalty for the sins of society.

* * *

The Three Daughters of Monsieur Dupont is the second play. Two middle-class families: the son of one marries the daughter of the other, and their respective parents employ all their energy and ability to swindle each other with the dowry. The matter is arranged like an ordinary horse trade. The girl's father, *Monsieur Dupont,* promises to pay a certain sum, in the way of a dowry, which he fully knows he can never pay. He is intent upon his daughter marrying the young man, because he believes that the old uncle of the bridegroom is very wealthy. But the young man's parents know very well that the uncle is on the verge of ruin, but as a matter of shrewd business, they carefully refrain from mentioning the fact. Thus the dirty deal is put through, and each family secretly rejoices to have successfully swindled the other side.

Thus are consummated the marriages consecrated in heaven!

But in the end the swindlers are the swindled. The young couple have no affection for each other, have nothing in common, and remain strangers in their home. The wife feels herself very unhappy. She tolerates sexual intercourse with her husband more like a lay figure than a live woman. Her husband, who measures everything with the yardstick of bourgeois success—i. e., business, money, and influential connections—wants no children. But his wife wants them, because she believes that children are the sole excuse for sexual intercourse with a man she does not love, and to whom she is not attached even with the ties of friendship or comradeship.

She protests and rebels; desperately she cries out all the bitterness of her wedded life. But in the end she submits to her fate: not to be loved, but to be legally outraged and raped in marriage.

The cause for this sacrifice of her personality is to be found mainly in the life of her two sisters. The one is an old spinster, who vainly seeks consolation in religion. She would marry any man, even without love, just to escape from her dreary loneliness. She inherits several

thousand francs, and at once lends half the sum to the foreman of her father's printing establishment, to promote an invention of his, with the express purpose that the obligation thus conferred should induce him to marry her. Her worthy father, becoming aware of the situation, grows furious; he had speculated on his daughter's money, hoping to induce her to sink it in his miserably conducted business, now at the point of bankruptcy.

The other sister had been years before turned out of home by her father, because of her illegal relationship with a young man. She had experienced a great deal, and was finally driven by want to prostitution. The married sister and the spinster are at first inclined to envy the *demi-mondaine,* because of her seemingly independent and easy life. But when she reveals to them the whole misery of her existence, its terrible emptiness and dreariness, the three sisters embrace each other, in the sad realization that the life of woman to-day, in whatever position, is a most pitiful one. Impressed by the hopelessness of the situation, the married sister forms a truce with her husband.

At this conclusion of the play, one is reminded of the characteristic appreciation of bourgeois married life, voiced in one of Zola's works by a servant girl: "Swine & Co!"

* * *

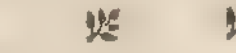
The third play of Brieux deals with the most "dangerous" of subjects—we whisper it fearfully into the ears of our readers (sh! Comstock might hear!)—syphilis, the theme of *Damaged Goods.*

For heaven's sake, the word must never be breathed in a decent publication. Such a respectable paper may print, of course, well-paid advertisements, by the aid of which quacks of all kinds swindle patients suffering from syphilis; but openly speak of it, impossible! The moralists feel the cold perspiration running down their back at the very thought of such a thing. A magazine that is fit to enter a respectable home must never even so much as mention this disease. And yet, so many thousands suffer from it. We know about prostitution, its causes and effects; we are aware that sexual diseases are a terrible calamity, only too general, almost universal;

and yet we persist in the incredible conspiracy neither to write nor speak about it.

Brieux speaks of it. He discloses the consequences, the disastrous results, of the ignorant tabooing of sexual matters. Syphilis is a disease like any other disease; but it becomes more dangerous and destructive chiefly because of the criminal conspiracy which imposes silence upon its victims, as if the disease reflected upon their characters. Against this vicious stupidity Brieux declares war; he dissects it unmercifully, and boldly exposes in *Damaged Goods* the "morality" that pollutes and poisons the relations of the sexes, morally as well as physically.

Every observer of life, every one concerned in the problems and struggles of our day, will read the *Three Plays** with vital interest and much benefit.



OUR SOCIAL LUNACY

The misery and squalor which we people of civilization bear with so much complacency as a necessary part of the manufacturing system, is just as necessary to the community at large as a proportionate amount of filth would be in the house of a private rich man. If such a man were to allow the cinders to be raked all over his drawing room, and a privy to be established in each corner of his dining room, if he habitually made a dust and refuse heap of his once beautiful garden, never washed his sheets or changed his tablecloth, and made his family sleep five in a bed, he would surely find himself in the claws of a commission de lunatico. But such acts of miserly folly are just what our present society is doing daily under the compulsion of a supposed necessity, which is nothing short of madness.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

* To be had through MOTHER EARTH Publishing Ass'n, $1.50.

REPORT OF THE WORK OF THE CHICAGO MEXICAN LIBERAL DEFENSE LEAGUE

ABOUT the middle of May, 1911, a few comrades in Chicago, responding to the appeal of the Junta of the Mexican Liberal Party, took up the task of informing themselves as to the underlying causes of the great revolutionary struggle in Mexico, and of spreading that information among others, to the end that they, too, contribute their share in making this mighty effort of a people fruitful in the minds of the enslaved of the world.

The longer we studied developments, the clearer it became that this was a social phenomenon offering the greatest field for genuine Anarchist propaganda that has ever been persented on this continent; for here was an immense number of oppressed people endeavoring to destroy a fundamental wrong, private property in land, not through any sort of governmental scheme, but by direct expropriation.

We, therefore, used every opportunity we could to win a hearing for the voice of the Mexican Liberals, *Regeneracion,* and to support it financially. We have not accomplished wonders, but we have done something; and it is with the hope of stimulating workers in other cities to do as well as we—and if better, we shall be only too glad—that I submit the following report.

At various picnics, private gatherings, and mass meetings we have sold copies of *Regeneracion,* or distributed freely the unsold copies, to the number of sixteen hundred. We have distributed four thousand copies of the leaflet "The Mexican Revolt" among the unions of this city; five thousand copies of W. C. Owen's leaflet on the McNamara case, showing that revolutionary action is the only possible cure for the evils under which all civilized countries are suffering. We have sold some two hundred copies of Owen's pamphlet on the Cause, Progress, Purpose, and Probable Outcome of the Mexican Revolution, and figure on distributing two hundred more during the coming month.

We have given a good many lectures and short talks in the city, at the Scandinavian Liberty League, at I. W. W. Local 85, and the Open Forum. We have held one

very successful international meeting, and are now arranging for another on the first of May. Our secretary, Honoré Jaxon, old-time land rebel of the Canadian northwest, visited England from August till March; had an excellent statement of Mexican conditions and the purposes of the revolution printed and distributed by the Standing Orders Committee of the British Trade Unions, beside several excellent interviews in the Manchester *Labor Leader* and other journals. Returning through Canada, similar interviews were printed in the largest newspapers of Montreal, Quebec, Toronto, and Winnipeg. Mr. Jaxon also lectured before the Trades and Labor Council of the first three cities, explaining the struggle of the Mexican proletariat.

In February, Ludovico Caminita visited the city, speaking on the Revolution in Italian; as the result of his visit, we came in touch with a few very active and self-sacrificing Spanish speaking comrades, from whose example we almost unconsciously adopted the habit of taxing ourselves a little weekly for the support of the paper.

I earnestly hope that those who read these lines will feel moved to form little local groups to do the same; no matter how little it is, it is something. And when we consider the uncomplaining poverty to which *Regeneracion's* workers reduce themselves (which may be seen from its weekly financial statements,—and I know no more speaking appeal than those careful accounts giving family men $3.00 or $5.00 a week to live upon) for the sake of thundering in the ears of this deaf world the battle-cry "Down with Authority—Land and Liberty," I really wonder how the mass of those who are sympathetic in idea with libertarian movements can continue to prattle about "art," "literature," the latest imported violinist, and the aesthetic beauty of the concepts of Anarchism! While these men fight the battle, with starvation as companion.

Comrades! We are apparently on the eve of a war of invasion to protect scoundrels in possession of the stolen lands of Mexico, against the revolt of a people who are being exterminated through this iniquity. Have you, you who read this, done anything to stop this crime? At least to register your protest? Have you circulated a

paper, a pamphlet, or a leaflet against it? Have you given a dollar to maintain the Word of Revolt?

I know many of you who sit in cafés hours at a time and discuss "Chanticleer"; spend dollars on theater tickets and concerts, and think nothing of expensive suppers. Do you think you are Anarchists? Do you know that your comrades whose very lives are voluntarily thrown in jeopardy, hourly, are living on less than you throw away? And asking no better than to go on doing it, if you will bear your share in spreading the propaganda of Revolt?

The trouble with us all has been that for many years we lived in the clouds of theory, because conditions made it impossible to do much else; and now that the condition for real work is here, we are so theory-rotted that we are helpless to face it. In the words of the editor of the Chicago *Post: "The Anarchists took to kissing games."* I who write have been as much to blame as any; let me shake off my blame by stirring you to awaken now. Cease theory-spinning about future society, and deal with what is before us, with what can be accomplished now.

Herewith I give financial statement of money received by me as treasurer of the League, and transmitted to the Junta at Los Angeles:

Collected on Subscription Lists in Chicago.....	$66.06
" " " " in Philadelhpia..	9.00
" " " " in Rochester....	9.75
" " " " in Buffalo.....	10.00
" " " " in St. Louis.....	2.75
" " " " in Atlantic City.	1.00
Donated by three Chicago Arbeiter Ring Branches.	8.00
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Sales of *Regeneracion*.....	41.50
Individual subscriptions	7.30
Collections and sales for leaflets and pamphlets..	31.35
Proceeds of meeting.....	20.60
Collections of Group for *Regeneracion*.....	35.65
Total.....	$247.96

April 1st, 1912, Chicago.

VOLTAIRINE DE CLEYRE, Treasurer.

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